

CHARIVARIA.

"THE Russian nation," declares a contemporary, "is bankrupt." This, however, is denied in St. Petersburg by the Official Deceivers.

An unpleasant impression has been caused in Germany by the publication in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of a letter written by a German officer denying that the British are assisting the Hereros. It is felt that it was unpatriotic of the officer to have written the letter, and still more unpatriotic of the *Kölnische Zeitung* to have published it.

HENDRICK WITBOI, the late Hottentot chief, is called by a contemporary "The Coloured DE WET." The insinuation that our Boer friend is "The Plain DE WET" is calculated to cause unnecessary pain.

It is feared that the fracture in Lord NELSON's remaining arm may necessitate its removal. But the statement that Sir FREDERICK TREVES is to shin up the column and perform the operation is premature.

"GEORGE EGER-TON," in *The Daily Mail*, pleads for British Toys. What's wrong, asks the County Council indignantly, with our steamboats?

It is stated that Mr. ANDREW CARNEGIE, who once, when hungry, ate the dinner of a railway engineer without permission, has sent the man £200 as a reminder of the incident. It is further stated that, since the publication of the fact, the distinguished millionaire can hardly stir out of his castle grounds without finding at least one dinner left carelessly in his way, the name and address of the owner being written on a label attached to the handle of the tankard.

The new issue of *Who's Who* is to contain, in addition to the usual information, a census of the celebrity's sons and daughters, and his telephone number; and, in reference to this, we hear that a terrible printer's mistake was only discovered at the last moment.

A literary gentleman was nearly credited with a family of 13982.

Among the arrivals at the Zoo last week were eight nose-horned vipers, one Wonga-Wonga pigeon, one hairy armadillo, one mute swan and a centipede. There was great excitement in the neighbourhood as each drove up, and it is hoped that all of them will make a lengthy stay in town.

News reaches us of the death in distressing circumstances of one of the most respected elephants living at Antwerp. An attendant left in the animal's shed a trunk containing clothes. This the poor beast, feeling cold, burst

not be more humane first to try the effect of a Naval Demonstration?

Are there motor-cars in the celestial regions? Professor SCHAEER, of Geneva, has discovered what he describes as a new comet plunging due south at a rate of almost 8 degrees a day, and careering across the Milky Way regardless of all other traffic.

In an explosion which wrecked a house in the suburbs last week, the only thing which escaped was the gas.

The Motor-Car Show at Olympia proved a great success. The £800 cars for men of small means are said to have sold especially well.

NOTICE TO SULTANS ALL OVER THE WORLD.—Assistance given. Terms moderate. References kindly permitted to Sultans of Morocco and Turkey. Telegraphic address, POTSDAMER, Berlin (Advt.).

We have always suspected that the best part of the exhibition at an aquarium is on the dry side of the glass, and we are glad to see that our view is corroborated by the fact that many of the younger generation of fish are voluntarily entering the tanks. Speaking of the Port Erin laboratory the *Liverpool Daily Post* says: "During the

past year about 5,000,000 of young plaice were sent out to sea from the fish hatchery, and over 13,000 paid for admission to the aquarium." The percentage is small, but promising.

GENERAL BETHUNE has informed the Devon Tactical Society that "the bayonet had always been the British weapon, and it was a comfort to know that they had it to fall back upon." The noble Romans, of course, used a sword, and fell forward on it.

"HOLLAND PARK TUBE, (close).—Board-Residence from 21s.—Advt. in "The Standard."

We agree. For residential purposes the Tube would be "close"—one might almost say stuffy.



Gipsy Fortune-teller (seriously). "LET ME WARN YOU. SOMEBODY'S GOING TO CROSS YOUR PATH." Motorist. "DON'T YOU THINK YOU'D BETTER WARN THE OTHER CHAP?"

open, and with pardonable ignorance put them inside instead of outside himself.

The report of the North Sea Fisheries Investigation Committee proves conclusively that fish are capable of making long journeys, and it is hoped that the more intelligent of them may yet be trained to swim right into Billingsgate and offer themselves to the highest bidder.

LORD HENEAGE, as President of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association, has suggested that the dog-fish which have been doing so much damage to the south-west coast fisheries should be caught and sold for food. Would it

YERKES'S JERKERS.

[American humour is enjoying a much-needed revival through the medium of Mr. YERKES, U.S.A. The foreign-built electric cars which he has placed on the District Railway (not to be confused with the workmanlike cars of the Metropolitan, English-built and under English control) are making laughter for all Londoners who can appreciate a practical joke made at their own expense. Still, as Mr. YERKES has other schemes in hand for the development of the Metropolis, it would be as well if the projected Traffic Board were to see that he does not carry his pleasantries too far.]

I stood at Putney on the platform's marge,
A first-class ticket in my hand,
And from my lips protruded, mild but large,
A fabric of the Fatherland;
And I was bound
For Charing Cross upon the District Underground.
A crash like skittle-balls on sheeted lead!—
I scanned the labels one by one;
"Where is the First-class smoking-car?" I said,
And the Guard answered, "There is none!"
And I was vexed,
And let the train proceed and waited for the next.
Contemporaneous with my fourth cigar
It came—O long desired in vain!—
And in the midst a First-class smoking-car
(So it alleged upon the pane);
And entering there
I sat on straw as sits an ox within his lair.
To left, a balmy fishwife, bosomed deep,
Palpably overlapped my space;
To right, my flank was elbowed by a sweep
That masked in soot his natural face;
And I inferred
That they had pardonably deemed the class was Third.
And when the wobbling waggons pulled up short
(YERKES® his jerkers, alien build!),
My dexter neighbour, lurching hard a-port,
Over my spotless cuff was spilled,
While I was thrust
Sinisterwise athwart the lady's ample bust.
Rising at Wallham (I could bear no more)
I underwent an instant jerk
And fell, and rose, and faced the sliding door,
And waited for the thing to work;
But he, the Guard,
Was occupied in sending signals to his pard.
So on to Brompton bumpily we bore,
Where I forestalled the instant jerk,
And clutched a strap, and smote upon the door,
And waited for the thing to work;
But in his groove
The patent apparatus stuck and would not move.
So on to Earl's Court. Here, against the laws,
Forth by an ingress-gate I went,
And in my passion, which allowed no pause,
Debouched upon, and nearly sent
Out of his mind,
A Bishop who would enter. He was left behind.
I fled. I had a whirling in my brains
Like to a landsman off the seas;
I asked a porter—"Have you any trains
Of the old pattern, not like these?"
And he replied,
"All but the Willesden lot are now electrified."

® Two syllables. Should not be rhymed with PERKS.

"How long before a Willesden comes this way?"

"In twenty minutes' time," said he.

I said, "I thank you. Though I had to stay

Two solid hours or even three,

I'd wait for that;"

And proffered sixpence, which he took and touched his hat.

O. S.

THE "SUDS" TRIPOS.

A LAUNDRY business has recently been started by three or four Varsity men on refined and apparently educational lines, and on November 22nd the promoters gave their Inaugural Washing Tea and Exhibition of Lingerie at the Grafton Galleries. A new career is thus opened up for younger sons. The authorities at Cambridge, anxious, as ever, to keep abreast of popular demands, have accordingly taken steps to institute Proceedings in Mangling and Laundry-work, similar to the existing Mechanical Science Tripos.

The examination will be almost entirely practical, and will involve little or no paper and celluloid work. The names of successful candidates for Honours will appear in the Washing List at the end of the May Term each year, arranged as usual in three classes, to be known respectively as Manglers, Senior Props, and Junior Props, the Wooden Spoon being replaced by a Clothes Peg. Women students, of course, will be admitted to the examination. The degree of L.L.M. shall be held to signify Licensed Laundry Man, or Maid, as the case may be.

The subjects of examination will embrace:—

"Rags," and how to deal with them.

The Strength of Materials, including Tearing and Breaking Strains.

The Theory of Structures, with the Differentiation of Pants and Pyjamas.

Character-reading from Ink-stains and Darns.

Friction as applied to the Frayed Shirt-front and Cuff.

Torsion of Collars and Chemisettes, with Wringing Out in general.

Hydraulics: "Running through Water," "Putting to Soak," and "Damping Down."

The Common Iron, Box-iron and Smoothing-iron, used (i.) as Beetle-crushing Implement, (ii.) for the production of Creases and "Crow's feet," (iii.) as Missile.

Gaufering and Frills: to suit the requirements of (a) Countesses, (b) Débutantes, (c) Gaiety Actresses.

Starch in all its aspects—Academic, Puritanical and Aristocratic.

Blue: the Light, the Dark, the Running, and the Aquatic varieties.

The Dynamics of Pegs, Lines, and Props in connection with the Back-garden.

Soap, visible and invisible.

The Art and Practice of Marking, Unmarking, Mislaying and Substitution.

Clients, Management of; also Pressure, by the County Court Process.

Lectures will be given by the Lowndrian Professor of Balneology on the above subjects at the Trinity Fountain, and by the Chinese Demonstrator on the Backs, where also the Examination will be held. Students are recommended to make occasional use of the K. P. and St. Andrew's Street Canals, but not to wash too much of their dirty linen in public, as on the occasion of the recent riots. They should also "get up" waistcoats, washing-ties, and other controversial items in private. Text-books on the subjects will be issued, duly glazed and calendered, from the Pitt Press. Further particulars regarding the forthcoming Tripos may be obtained from the University Wash-houses Syndicate.

ZIG-ZAG.



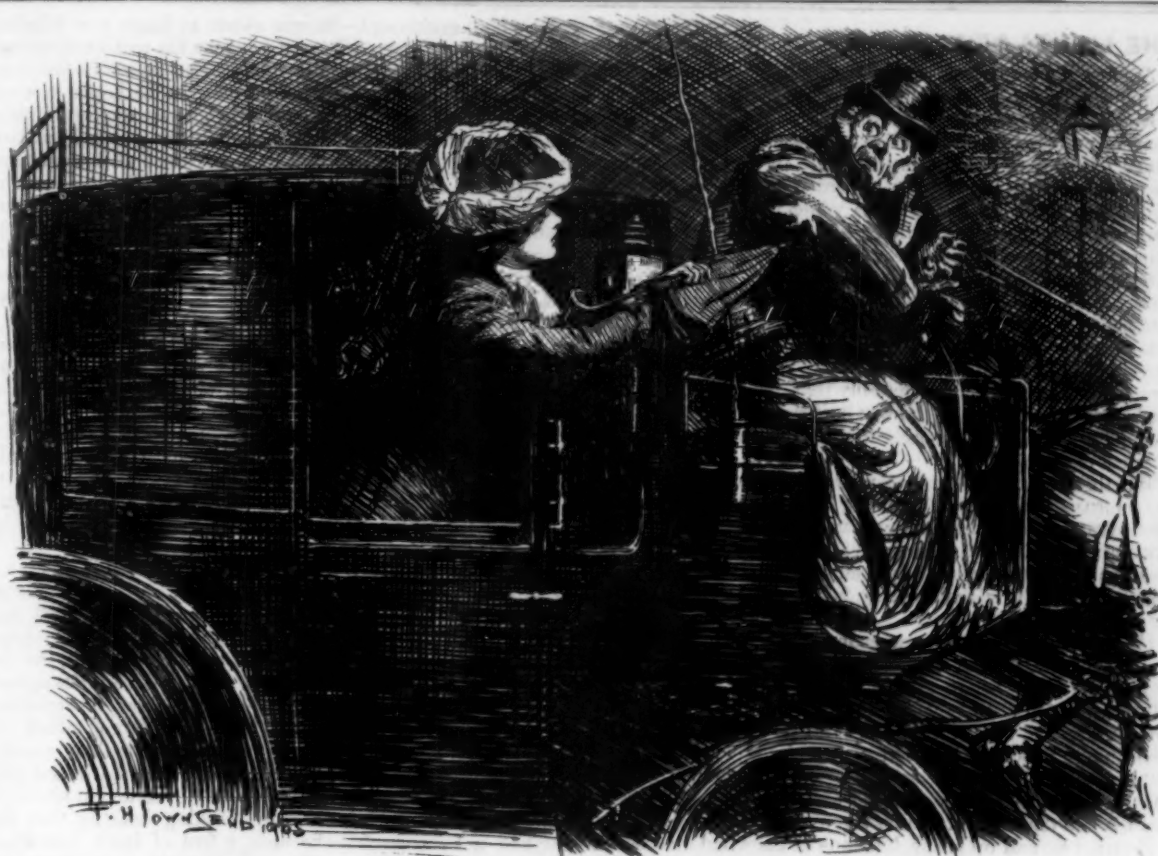
ON TOUR.

R-S-B-R-Y. "STILL PLAYING 'TARIFF REFORM,' EH?"

CH-MD-RL-N. "YES. I'M PRACTICALLY RUNNING THE SHOW. CROWDED HOUSES, DEAR BOY. AND YOU?"

R-S-B-R-Y. "OH, THE USUAL THING. JUST WORKING ON MY OWN."





"CARMAN! CARMAN!! SURELY YOU'RE GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY?"

"BLESS ME, MUM, YOU GIVE ME QUITE A TURN! I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT YER, AND WAS DRIVING BACK TO THE STABLES."

A TRAGEDY AND ITS SEQUEL.

I.—RHYMSTER TO ROOSTER.

O THOU, that 'neath my Attic sill
Standing aloof a sleepless sentry,
Dost hail in accents rudely shrill
The futile morn's tumultuous entry;

Prodigious chanticleer, whose lung
Applauds each nascent dawn with
frequent

Praens, as though some virtue clung
To suns monotonously sequent;

A murrain seize thee, boisterous bird,
And stem thy low hilarious bawling;
In all my life I never heard
Sounds so persistently appalling.

It's not so much the pent-up power
With which thy potent trump impinges
On sleepless ears, that hour by hour
I lie a prey to nervous twinges;

It is the loud exuberant zest,
The blatant cheerfulness that irks us;
The moral pose of one whose breast
Defies the ills that fortune works us.

Preposterous optimist; perpend!
This scheme of things however view'd 'll
Afford no prospect that can lend
Cause to thy monstrous cock-a-doodle.

Know that thou, too, art nearly ripe
To meet the doom that Fate decrees, and
Ere long shalt feel Disaster's gripe
Closing about thy bumptious weazand.

And shall I gaze on thee in grief
When thou appearest on my platter?
Not so. I'll murmur with relief,
"This ends that odious rooster's
clatter."

And if perchance thou provest tough,
If in my sleep thou still dost haunt me,
I'll suffer cheerfully enough
So thou art not alive to taunt me!

II.—ROOSTER TO RHYMSTER.

(Later.)

Thou Bard that erst with clumsy quill
And spleenful soul didst dare to loose
On me that never worked thee ill
A vulgar flow of low abuse;

Who, just because I called on Hope's
Reviving ray to ease my lot,
First trounced me with indifferent tropes
And then consigned me to the pot;

My turn has come! Thou liest awake;
The beads of anguish deck thy brow;
Thou didst oppress me, but I take
A lingering vengeance on thee now.

Yea, for thou didst not bid me die
To solve the common need for food,
Thou didst but hope to gratify
The cravings of a baleful mood.

I was the pride of all the street,
The matchless champion of the herd,
The children loved me—but to eat,
Others had sought a tenderer bird!

And didst thou then aspire to miss
The proper wages of thy sin,
Hoping perchance that Nemesis
Would spare thy mortifying skin?

Too long thou hast with fretful pen
Bewailed imaginary ills,
And railed aloud at Fortune when
The proper remedy was pills.

Too long a world of blackest hue
Has met the poet's jaundiced eyes,
A state of things due solely to
The want of wholesome exercise.

But now a timely blow is struck
By Retribution long defied;
It isn't fancy now, my buck,
This time you've got it right inside!

Writhe on, thou poor dyspeptic Bard,
And, should'st thou dare again to roast
The lordliest rooster in the yard,
Beware his disembodied ghost! ALGOL.

THE LIGHTS OF SPENCER PRIMMETT'S EYES.

SPENCER PRIMMETT was a most worthy and estimable young man. He had a good position for his years in one of the Government Departments, as well as a comfortable private income, and his chief ambition was to avoid any conduct which might render him conspicuous. In this object he had so far succeeded admirably. There was nothing whatever remarkable about his countenance, which was mild and rather round, or his demeanour, which was quite unassuming, or his opinions, which were those of all well-regulated persons.

So that mothers and *chaperons* generally regarded him with favour as a highly eligible *parti*—a fact of which he was complacently aware. He had, indeed, but one defect, and that of so gradual a growth that it was some time before he perceived it himself—he was extremely near-sighted. It struck him more and more forcibly that the English climate was growing mistier, and he was surprised that none of his friends was observant enough to notice so obvious an atmospheric change.

But there came an afternoon when, in paying a call on the BELLINGHAMS in Cornwall Gardens, he discovered with some confusion that he had been vainly trying to induce a footstool to sit up and beg for a biscuit—which convinced him that his eyesight must be slightly impaired, and that he must really protect himself from making any further mistakes by getting an eyeglass.

He had another and a stronger motive for doing so. HILDA and RHODA BELLINGHAM were both extremely attractive girls, and he had lately begun to conceive it possible that he might fall in love with one of them. But which?—he could not be sure that he had ever seen either at all distinctly. It seemed advisable to make himself better acquainted with the actual features of each before committing himself to any definite advances to either. It would be a pity to find out when it was too late that he had chosen the plainer of the two.

He tried several opticians, but none of them had an eyeglass or even a *pince-nez* that suited his sight. Then he did what he ought to have done before—he consulted a leading oculist. After a prolonged examination the oculist informed him that he was "abnormally astigmatic," which seems a harsh thing to say about any man.

However, he wrote him out a prescription for a pair of glasses of differing powers, which SPENCER took to the firm to whom he was recommended. And a few days afterwards, on returning from Whitehall to his rooms one afternoon, he found a neat little parcel awaiting him, containing a pair of spectacles and the account, which came to more than he had expected. He put them on and inspected himself, not without anxiety, in a hand-glass. It was a great relief to him to find that they were by no means unbecoming. His eyes looked larger and more brilliant now they were framed and glazed; the glasses gave him an air of higher intelligence, deeper thoughtfulness, than he had previously discerned in his expression.

Still, it was not vanity, but an overpowering impatience to see what the Miss BELLINGHAMS were really like, that made him call a hansom and drive at once to Cornwall Gardens. As he fared westward, facing the sunset sky, he was delightfully conscious of his improved powers of vision; he could now see the most distant objects, defined with a sharpness that was a positive revelation to him. He remarked things that would previously have escaped him—for instance, the incompetency of London cabmen—for the drivers of quite a number of hansoms he met seemed to have the greatest difficulty in controlling their horses. Fortunately his own cabman was an exception to the general rule, and brought him to Cornwall Gardens without mishap.

SPENCER found that both Mrs. BELLINGHAM and her daughters

were at home, and he entered the drawing-room with suppressed excitement—he was about to know now whether it was HILDA or RHODA who was to prove his real enchantress. They welcomed him cordially enough, and he took a seat near the fire, while he gazed with an intentness he hoped was not too apparent at the two graceful girls who sat opposite him in the lamplight. He could see their features perfectly at last, and was delighted to find that they surpassed all his previous conceptions. Even then he found it as difficult as ever to decide which was the more irresistibly engaging, they were both so adorably pretty in their different styles—but at least he saw now that there *was* a difference. So he sat there talking—rather pleasantly, he thought,—to all three ladies, and feeling that he was making a very favourable impression. Presently, indeed, he began to fear that he was inspiring a deeper sentiment in both the Miss BELLINGHAMS than he had any right or intention to do at that stage. Without being unduly conceited, he could not but observe that as often as he turned to address HILDA, she regarded him with a kind of spell-bound attention resembling fascination, whereas RHODA, on the other hand, seemed powerless to meet his eyes at all. These were trifles—but significant. He was beginning to think he had better go, when the dog, which had previously been snoring soundly in its basket, created a diversion by coming out.

SPENCER made no mistake this time; he knew it was not a footstool, or even a doormat, so he beamed on it with amiable recognition, and called it by name. It gave a short howl, and fled into the back drawing-room with every sign of abject terror. SPENCER said he could not understand it, as he generally got on so well with dogs. The BELLINGHAMS agreed that it was most unaccountable—but somehow the incident caused a certain constraint. HILDA and RHODA talked on fluently enough, but rather at random, and their mother showed a nervous restlessness which was unusual in one who was so essentially a woman of the world. So he cut short his visit, after only staying an hour, wishing heartily that the dog had not chosen to make such a fool of itself just when things were going so well, and wondering whether the BELLINGHAM family was not inclined to be slightly hysterical.

SPENCER had to dine out that evening. It was at a house in Lancaster Gate, and he arrived quite a quarter of an hour after everybody else, so that he could hardly expect anything but a cold reception—which he certainly got.

He was consoled, however, by the discovery that the BELLINGHAMS were among the party, and that he was to have the privilege of taking in Miss HILDA. He would have been equally pleased had it been her sister—for they were both looking more bewitching than ever in that brilliantly lighted room. But something—he knew not what—had come between him and HILDA—he distinctly noticed her flinch as he offered his arm. And at table it was only by an obvious effort that she looked at him in speaking, and then she promptly turned away her head with what, unless his fancy deceived him, was almost a shudder. At the first opportunity she entered into animated conversation with her right-hand neighbour—after which he saw nothing of her but a left shoulder till dessert.

He would have talked to the lady on his left—but she was entirely engrossed by her allotted partner. So, in his isolation, SPENCER was reduced to casting glances of pathetic appeal to RHODA, who sat opposite. He succeeded in catching her eye, because he saw her start and bite her lip as if to control her feelings, but she avoided any answering sign of sympathy or encouragement. What on earth was the matter with them? Could they really attach any importance to the fact that their little beast of a terrier had shown an unreasonable antipathy to him?

He did not seem popular with anybody there, for, as his eyes wandered idly round the table, it seemed to him that every face on which his gaze lighted immediately froze, as though



RETALIATION.

Comic Man (to unappreciated tenor, whose song has just been recited in stony silence). "I SAY, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SING AN ESCORTE, ARE YOU?"
Unappreciated Tenor (firmly). "YES, I AM. SERVE THEM RIGHT!"

petrified. He had arrived rather late, it was true; but, hang it all! he could not have spoilt their dinner so much as all that!

It was horrible to sit there feeling like an apologetic skeleton! After the ladies had left, Mr. BELLINGHAM, as his habit was, began to monopolise the conversation. He was a bit of a bore, but nevertheless SPENCER, in his anxiety to propitiate at least one member of the family, leant forward and listened with deferential interest. But he did not propitiate the old gentleman—he merely put him out. Mr. BELLINGHAM became more and more discomposed under SPENCER's absorbed attention, till at length his monologue came to a lame and abrupt conclusion.

Gallantly PRIMMETT attempted to relieve the awkward silence that followed by throwing out an intelligent remark on some topic of the day. He said nothing, he was certain, that was not perfectly safe in any company—but his platitudes burst like bombshells on his hearers; everyone appeared to dread being drawn into conversation with him. He saw those he addressed blink nervously as they returned some monosyllabic reply, while others evaded his advances by looking in any other direction but his. He affected the nerves of the very servants, for, as he turned towards a footman who was offering him coffee, the man dropped the tray with a crash. He had never felt so little at home at any dinner-party in his whole life. When he went upstairs he was unable to obtain an explanation with either HILDA or RHODA before they left, which they did early. He left himself shortly afterwards, and it struck him that his hostess was glad to get rid of him.

He was conscious that he had shed a kind of blight on her party—how or why he was at a loss to imagine. Was some abominable rumour being circulated affecting his character? But no, that was impossible, his conscience assured him that he could have given no occasion for any sort of scandal. Then why—*why* did the BELLINGHAMS and everybody else shrink from him as if he were some accursed thing? Would no one ever look him in the face with frank friendliness again? Gloomily he asked himself these questions as he stood on his hearthrug before the fire, and then suddenly, on looking up, he beheld his own reflection in the mirror above the mantelpiece, and recoiled in positive terror. For his eyes were no human eyes—they were two glowing caverns flickering with lurid flames, as though his brain were being slowly consumed! The effect was simply appalling. He saw now that no man with eyes like those could hope to inspire the object of his affections with any sentiment but instinctive horror! And yet how could he have suffered this transformation into a fiend of peculiarly repulsive aspect without being even aware of the process? Then all at once he remembered his spectacles; they fitted him so well that almost from the first he had forgotten their very existence. However, he found he was still wearing them. Perhaps, if he took them off—he removed them, and on approaching the mirror closely, discovered with inexpressible relief that the baleful glare had vanished from his eyes. He put them on once more, and placing himself behind a lamp at some distance from the mirror, observed the result. One oval, being slightly concave, threw rays as blinding as those of a searchlight; the other lens, which was convex, blazed like one of the illuminated globes in a chemist's window! To himself this disquieting phenomenon was apparent only when a strong artificial light struck his spectacles at particular angles of refraction from the mirror—which accounted for his failure to notice it by daylight, or even while dressing for dinner. But it made him understand *now* why the cabhorses had shied that afternoon; why the BELLINGHAMS' dog had fled; why, in short, all through that fearful evening he had been unconsciously producing the effect of a human basilisk or a Medusa head. He would do so no

more—it made him too remarkable. So in another instant these costly glasses were lying ground to splinters under SPENCER's heel. . . .

Since that day he has worn no others, and is rewarded for his sacrifice by the knowledge that he can allow his eyes to rest now on both the Miss BELLINGHAMS without the slightest apprehension of reducing them to a cataleptic condition. The only drawback is that he is as unable as ever to distinguish one from the other. Which is possibly the reason why there has been no announcement, as yet, of his engagement to either.

F. A.

THE CAUTIOUS LOVER.

[“It is impossible for a man, whether he be merely a boy in years or an octogenarian, to approach any female in the hope of finding his ‘twin soul,’ without fear of a wretched and harassing action at law unless he marries her.”—*Daily Express*.]

My panting heart is longing day and night

For a sight

Of some angelic phantom of delight,

So slender, so tender—inviting one to kiss,

To thrill one and fill one

With bliss.

I gaze at fair SUSANNAH—kind and wise

Are her eyes,

And purer than the blue of April skies.

It strikes me she likes me—Oh! surely, pretty SUE,

A chappie were happy

With you!

Then HANNAH smiles divinely when we meet

In the street;

Her waist is small, her ankle very neat.

I'm lonely—if only this inexpressive She

Were walking and talking

With me!

Dear NANCY has a noble soul—in fine,

I opine,

In every way a worthy mate for mine.

I fancy, sweet NANCY, thrice blest would be our plight

Did we two agree to

Unite.

But ah! these pleasing visions flit in vain

Through my brain,

For Prudence speaks in language that is plain:

“Be wary! That fairy whose eyes appear so true

Is ‘cuter, poor suitor,

Than you.

“She's heard of breach of promise and she knows,

I suppose,

Precisely how the usual verdict goes.

You dunce, you! If once you are seen with her alone

She'll collar each dollar

You own.”

I hear and Reason tells me to obey

While I may,

Although my heart may point the other way.

I'll never endeavour to steal another glance

At HANNAH, SUSANNAH

Or NANCE.

“Mrs. — has for SALE, in consequence of her daughter's marriage, grand Lady's HUNTER; has carried her two seasons without mistake in front of hounds.”—*The Field*.

It may not have been the horse's mistake, but surely somebody must have blundered to have placed it in such a false position.



"AH, MUM; I'M A 'EAP BETTER IN MY 'EART SINCE LAST TIME YOU COME 'ERE A-DISTRICT VISITIN'. IT'S ALL ALONG O' THISHER LITTLE BOOK 'HERNEST WORDS TO THE YOUNG' AS I PINCHED OUTSIDE A BOOKSHOP WEN THE PROPPERRIETIER WAS A-LOOKIN' THE OTHER WAY. A POWER O' GOOD IT 'AVE DONE ME!"

OPERATIC NOTES.

Tuesday, Nov. 21.—*Faust* in a fog. Madame MELBA's *Margherita* admirable. No use mentioning details, everybody knows them. Only they do not know—at least the majority do not—how powerful her notes are until they have heard her in a fog. Very badly drained site must have been the house where *Margherita* resided. Perhaps the garden which we all know so well looked on the river. However, be that as it may, on Tuesday the fog predominated, and *Faust* must either have found *Margherita* by accident, or have lost her altogether, as the audience was certainly fogged by the atmosphere.

And "the voices" (which simple description reminds us of JOAN OF ARC) were eminently satisfactory. Experienced habitués, knowing the "stage business," could listen with pleasure and with closed eyes. Signor DIDUR as *Mefisto*, some years younger than former *Mefistos*, in consequence of the absence of the little billy-goat imperial on the chin hitherto associated with this character, was excellent as well dramatically as musically. With Signor ZENATELLO's *Faust* little fault could be found, and the same may be said of Signor BATTISTINI's *Valentino*. Signora TRENTINI was a charming *Siebel*—*si belle!*—and Signora ZACCARIA was a *Marta* to *Mefisto*, and seemed young enough to have deceived even *Mefisto*'s superior officer. Signor MUGNONE and orchestra in first-rate order. Applause immense, and, despite fog, five calls after "the garden party." Nothing could be more polite; garden party first, calls afterwards. *Faust* is announced for repetition before this brief notice appears.

Thursday, Nov. 23.—No fog!! Atmosphere clear: House full. Late arrival this season of *Don Giovanni*, ably repre-

sented by Signor BATTISTINI. Signora STRAKOSCH as *Donna Anna* seemed rather frightened, that is, at least, judging by her persistent tremolo. This view of *Donna Anna*'s character we venture to consider incorrect. *Donna Elvira* was fairly well represented, vocally, by Mme. GILBERT-LEJEUNE; Signorina CLASENTI's *Zerlina* will probably improve on repetition. No doubt, after a rehearsal or two, competently directed, the clever Signora will "reform it altogether."

A jovial party is the *Don Giovanni* of Signor BATTISTINI, and on the whole, musically and dramatically, a happy impersonation. Both Signor B. and Signorina C. rise to heights never contemplated by MOZART. But even MOZART was not up to everything. Signor DIDUR was good in the farcical nonsense of *Leporello*, as was Signor WIGLEY as the idiotic *Mazetto*. Where is the brilliant stage-manager who will do something for the stupid old "business" which has been allowed to become traditional in these two low-comedy parts?

Signor GIORGINI as *Don Ottavio* made the most of his one great chance, "*Il mio tesoro*," but contrary to precedent *Zerlina* and *Mazetto*, evidently expecting a real musical treat, remained on the stage to listen to *Don Ottavio*'s rendering of this *chef d'œuvre*. Both of them were evidently immensely pleased, though perhaps for professional reasons they did not insist upon an encore, reserving their hearty congratulations until they should meet *Don Ottavio* "off" at "the wings." Three orchestras, including the Ball-room scene, all under the *bâton* of Maestro MUGNONE, most effective, and, taken as a whole, the *Don* achieved success.

With the last night of November comes the close of the Autumnal Opera Season. We trust it has been sufficiently successful (from the interior of cash-box point of view) to warrant an encore next year. "*Prosit!*"



The Master. "How do you know it was a fox killed them?"

Master. "Then why didn't you stop him?"

Biddy. "Sure, it wasn't likely I'd be grudoin' yer Honour's foxes a chicken or two, and thim as chape as two shillins apiece, too."

Biddy. "Didn't I see him wid me two eyes?"

THE HALF-SEAS-OVER EDITION.

I HAVE a magic looking-glass in which every week I see men and women in far-off lands—dear friends whom I know, but whom I have never seen. This looking-glass is the post.

I see them in their pursuits in every corner of the earth. I see them in Europe and Asia, America and Tipperary. It is like WALT WHITMAN. Some of them are shooting tigers, some are reading under the sea, some are sitting on mountain peaks, but all are alike in this—that they cannot help liking our paper, and they cannot help writing letters about it. Some of them omit to stamp the envelopes, but I don't mind. I love them too much to mind. I am too full of sloppy gratitude. I append selection of this week's letters.

EDITOR OF THE HALF-SEAS-OVER EDITION.

FROM THE EVERLASTING HILLS.

I write from a little bungalow on the very top of Mount Everest to tell you what a boon your paper is. It is delivered regularly by eagle post every Saturday morning, and I don't know how I could live without it.

HIMMEL AYAH.

The Gazebo, Mt. Everest.

FROM DOWN UNDER.

I don't know how we should live without your invaluable paper, for the persistent rains for the last six months, during which they have never once stopped, have saturated all the small wood in the country. Nothing but the periodical appearance of the postman saves us, for he brings every member of the camp a copy of your Half-Seas-Over Edition, dry and combustible, and we keep our fires going with that.

BRIAN O'LYNN.

Washaveay P.O., Buncombe, N.S.W.

FROM THE SHINY LAND.

I am sure you will like to know that I kill a tiger for breakfast every morning from my bed-room window. There is no such luxury as tiger steak and brandy-pawnee with a few paragraphs from your beautiful paper by way of digestive. I never read it all through at once, but apportion it equally throughout the week.

J. SKRIMSHANKS.

Puttee Bungalow, Ootacamund.

FROM THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

I have just received a copy of your lovely paper. What a boon to have so much absolutely trustworthy news of the dear homeland! Fifteen years have I now been in the back of beyond, having

moved hither from the now prosperous city of Tipperusalem in 1890. I left Eton in 1882, and after holding the professorship of Chinook at the Algonquin University am now engaged in trapping seals for the Hudson Soap and Candle Company. Throughout the whole winter I and my squaw—she was a noted belle of the Waw-Waw tribe—have to live on salt or pickled fish, so you may imagine what a relief your easily digestible pars are to us, and our seven little nippers.

GEORGE QUACKENBOS,
"SITTING DUCK."

Wampumville, Saskatchewan.

FROM THE PERSIAN GULF.

Since your Half-Seas-Over Edition has been published the supply of pearls has been falling off steadily here. Last week we discovered the reason. The divers, instead of hunting for pearls as they used to do, now sit round in a circle on lumps of coral while one of them reads the paper aloud.

ALFRED BILGER.

Bushire, R.S.O.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.—The best way of making two ends meet:—burn the candle at both ends.



BEGINNING AT THE RIGHT END.

ARN-OLD-F-EST-R- (Sculptor). "I MAY NOT HAVE TIME TO FINISH IT, BUT I'VE GOT THE HEAD ALL RIGHT."

[The Secretary of State for War is appointing a General Staff, which will constitute the brains of the army.]

LILLIAN.

VII.—THE GREAT SERVANT QUESTION.

ONE of the maids (ELLEN, the pretty one) had been walking out for some weeks with MCGREGOR, who is the right-hand man of the butcher. They had kept company in Scotland somewhere; and when ELLEN was ordered south MCGREGOR threw up what I take to have been a lucrative job as a blacksmith, practised anatomy and things for a month on his father's flock, and came down to us as a butcher's assistant. Which shows the power of love and the adaptability of the Briton that has made our Empire what it is. (*Loud cheers.*)

When there's an ELLEN in the case, it is an advantage of the butcher's profession that you must come up to the house at least once a day. But MCGREGOR yearned for other meetings. At the bottom of our kitchen garden is a brick wall—high on the road side and fairly low on ours. Every night ELLEN stood here and leant over, *Juliet*-way, while down in the dust on the other side was *Romeo* MCGREGOR. I suppose they liked the romance of it, there being really nothing to stop ELLEN from going out at the gate.

Now, personally, I was rather keen on the ELLEN-MCGREGOR comedy. I think MCGREGOR one of the most sporting self-made butchers I have ever known. In any case I should have made no objections, because I think the other sort of person has as much right to his feelings as we have, and I know that if I was going to meet LILLIAN somewhere I should be extremely annoyed to find that the coachman made a fuss about it. But, at the same time, there was GRACE to consider. GRACE was all against that sort of thing, and it was GRACE's house. And, you know, I had a lot of leeway to make up with GRACE. I thought that if I took up a strong line here she would come to love and then to lean upon her brother-in-law.

So one day, quite as a coincidence, I ordered a gardener to tar the top of the kitchen-garden wall. He seemed to want to know the idea, so I said that it would keep the slugs from climbing over (slugs not being able to bear the smell of tar), and that, anyhow, he didn't seem to me to be doing much. I think he must have caught on, because he grinned like anything, and made a first-rate job of it.

Well, the walkers-out went through the Balcony Scene again that night, and I wondered what they would make of my little hint. I shall never know definitely what MCGREGOR said; but next morning an indignant ELLEN flounced into the breakfast-room, and said that she wished to give me notice. She seemed to have taken it quite in the wrong spirit.



Schoolmaster. "COME TO MY ROOM AFTER SCHOOL, AND I'LL GIVE YOU THE SOUNDTEST THRASHING YOU EVER HAD!"

Boy (who suffers from a weak memory). "Yes, Sir. I'LL TIE A KNOT IN MY HANDKERCHIEF!"

No one has ever wished to give me notice before. At the same time I had gathered that it was rather a serious thing to happen in a house. But I wasn't going to be disturbed about it. I got her assurance that threats, prayers, and entreaties were alike useless; and then I asked her what she was going to do. It seemed only kind to take an intelligent interest in her future.

She replied rather darkly that those who lived the longest would see the most, though I doubt it myself. Also that she wanted to go at once. So I gave her a sovereign and said I hoped she and Mr. MCGREGOR would be very happy, and would often think of me. Then I wrote to GRACE that ELLEN was leaving at once to get married.

GRACE's first letter I pass over. I don't see how I am in any way responsible for the affections of a butcher who was once a blacksmith. A week later she wrote that no one in London knew anything about servants; but that there was an Ashurst girl who seemed fairly suitable.

"I have asked her to go over on Wednesday," she wrote, "and I know it's useless for you to interview her, so I am getting LILLIAN to see to it for me. Now don't interfere, there's a good boy. LILLIAN knows just what I want."

LILLIAN was staying with some friends of hers called WILLEY—not that the WILLEY part is very important. However, she was due back on Tuesday night; and, if GRACE had arranged it so, would no doubt come over on the Wednesday morning to interview the new maid. I would certainly not interfere.

I was enjoying a peaceful pipe on the fatal morning, when a maid came in and announced that a young person wished to see me.

"What sort of a young person?" I asked.

"I think she's come about a situation, Sir."

"Oh, help. LILLIAN—Miss MALLEY—was going to see about that. I wonder why she isn't here."

"The young woman says she hasn't

much time, as she has to catch a train back."

"Look here, send GEORGE or somebody round to Miss MALLEY—quick. I suppose I'd better talk to her a bit till Miss MALLEY comes. I say, MARY, what sort of questions—? Oh, never mind."

I went into ARTHUR's study where she was. It was too awful being left like this. I didn't know a bit what one ought to ask her.

The first thing I noticed was that she was jolly pretty, and looked very smart, though of course quiet. As far as I was concerned she might consider herself engaged. But there were certain formalities, I imagined.

"How do you do?" I began; "you've come about ELLEN's place? Do sit down. There'll be a lady here presently, but there are just one or two things I want to ask you."

"Thank you, Sir."

I looked about for a pen.

"Jolly day, isn't it?" I said.

"Yes, Sir."

I got a pen and gnawed the end of it. Then I sat down at the table, took a sheet of paper, and looked first at it and then at her.

"Was there anything else you wanted to ask me, Sir?"

I sat up with a start.

"Name," I said, sternly.

"JANE SMITH."

"JANE?"

"SMITH. S-M-I-T-H."

"Yes, yes," I said. "That—er—that seems all right. Age?"

"Twenty—twenty—twenty-three," she said, and giggled in a most absurd way.

"I don't know why I asked you. I don't suppose it matters much. Now what else is there? Oh yes, are you fond of work?"

"I try to do my duty, Sir."

"Yes, of course, of course. I felt sure you did. Now what about followers?"

"Followers?"

"Yes. I know I ought to ask you about that."

JANE SMITH drew herself up to her full height, which wasn't so very much.

"Having none, partner?" I said. "I mean—"

"I don't think I understand."

"All right, all right. We'll leave the great follower question undecided. Have you got your testimonials with you?" I thought it was rather clever of me to remember that.

"Oh," she said. "I haven't got any."

"Haven't got any? Now, what is the good of coming here without your testimonials? I suppose you haven't even got a reference from a benefited clergyman of the Church of England?"

"N-no, Sir."

"You seem to me to have been very badly brought up," I said sternly. "What have you got? You must have something."

"I've a character from my last place."

"Hang it, that's what I meant. What does it say?"

"Clean, sober—"

"Sober is rather a point," I admitted.

"Steady, willing, hard-working, careful—"

"Stop," I said. "This is a quotation. Yes, it is. I know the chapter quite well. It's in one of the Epistles."

"Willing—"

"You said willing. I don't believe it comes twice in the original. Why should it?"

"Honest—"

"I say, I'm thinking we're rather lucky to get you."

"Hard-working, clean—"

"That will do! You're engaged."

"Steady, sober—"

"Stop!" I heard a step in the hall.

"Hooray! There's LILLIAN." I rushed out, and caught hold of her. "Quick! The new maid's in there. She's telling me her character. It's too awfully good. Something will happen to her. Do stop her."

I pushed her in, and went outside to finish my pipe on the lawn.

After about ten minutes LILLIAN joined me.

"Well," I said, "did you engage her?"

"Yes, rather."

"Has she gone?"

"Yes, ETHEL's just gone."

"ETHEL? She told me her name was JANE SMITH."

"No. ETHEL JONES."

"I thought so. People aren't called JANE SMITH."

"No, of course not."

"Why did she say JANE SMITH? She must have had a false character. I'm afraid she's taken you in, LILLIAN."

"No, I don't think so. And, Dick, you're to come to dinner to-night. And look nice."

In the Malley drawing-room the first person I saw was JANE SMITH, or ETHEL JONES.

"Look here," I said indignantly, "I engaged you. What are you doing here?"

"Hallo, DICK," said LILLIAN, coming up.

"I say, LILLIAN, this is cool. You've bagged our maid. I distinctly engaged JANE SMITH this morning myself, and then you nip in—"

"Mr. MEADOWS, Miss WILLEY," said LILLIAN. "Look at the maid's nice new evening dress, DICKIE."

"Lord!" I said.

"Sober is rather a point," said Miss WILLEY.

"I'm thinking we're rather lucky to get you," said LILLIAN.

"Twenty—twenty—twenty-three," said Miss WILLEY, cooly.

"I try to do my duty, Sir," said LILLIAN.

"It's a very old joke," I said to LILLIAN, as I took her in. "You'll find the poor thing in *She Stoops to Conquer*."

"Oh, DICKIE, is that the way it's going to be?"

"Don't be absurd. Is she going to stay long?"

"Some weeks."

"Good," I said.

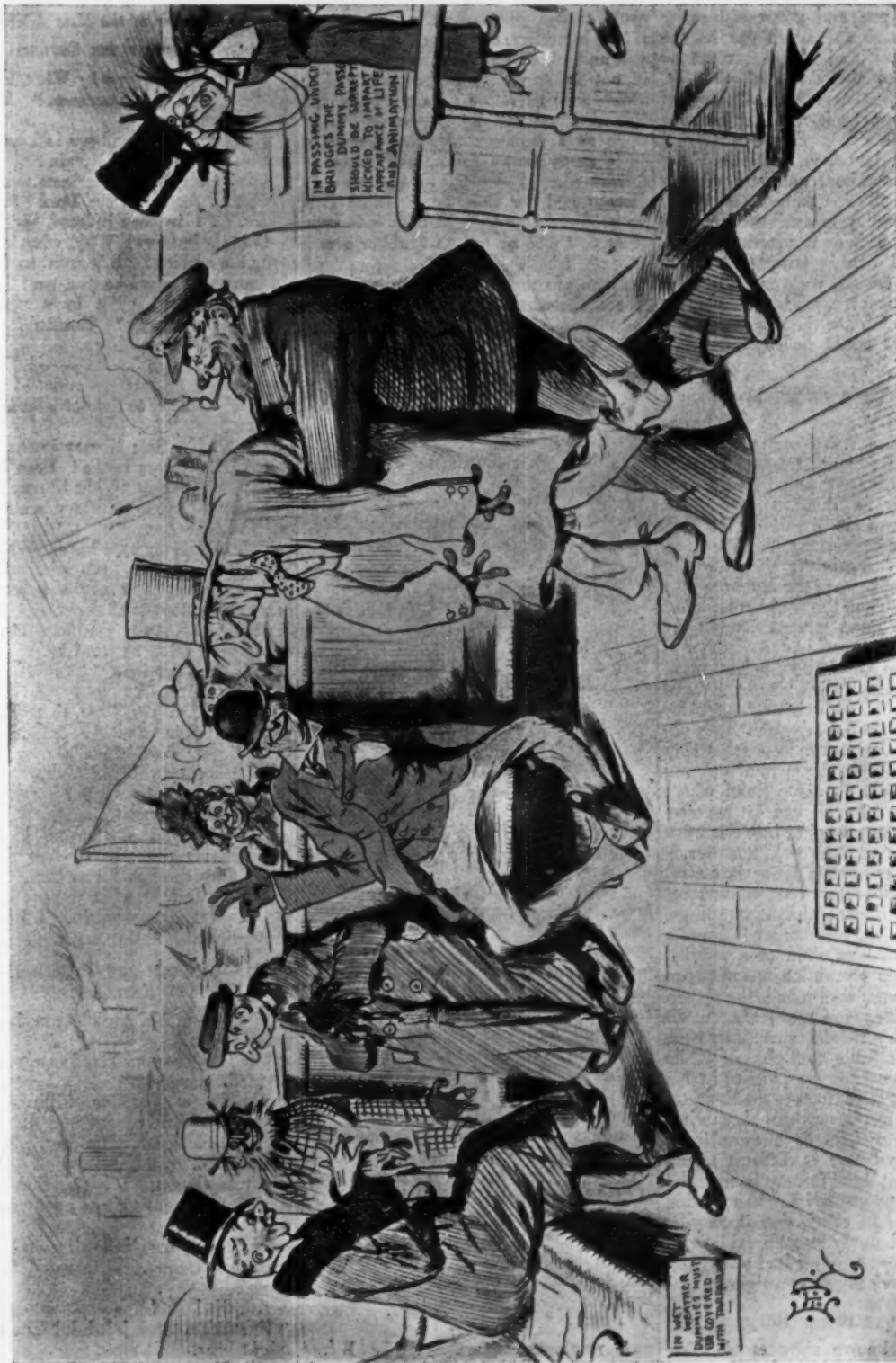
MR. PUNCH'S "FIRST TREATMENT" SERIES.

[An evening paper has just published an article on the pressing subject "How to Deal with a Dog Fish."]

I.—A POLAR BEAR AT THE STORES.

The principal point is locality; one's plan of action depending very largely upon the part of the building in which the beast is encountered. For example, if the polar bear should come upon you in the Millinery Department the wisest course would perhaps be at once to seize the most expensive hat and show him the price. During his fainting fit you could climb out of the window or up the chimney, or even find the door. This plan might not, however, be infallible, for *suppose the polar bear could not read?* In the event of its failure you would naturally make a break for the next room, which might possibly be the Fish Department.

Here nature would assist you, for you would of course placate the foe with mackerel and herrings, which you could throw to him one by one (as at the Hippodrome), walking backwards as you did so, and eventually reaching the door and safety. But Fate is seldom so kind as that, and it is far more likely that the entertainment-loving gods would arrange it that your first meeting with the bear was round a corner, suddenly, in the Tobacco or Drapery Department. Polar bears do not smoke, and are not, we believe, susceptible to the charms of the leaf, so you would need all your wits. The thing to do would be swiftly to fill and light several pipes at once, and smoke them so furiously that you created an impenetrable cloud, under cover of which you could escape into a department offering a better choice of weapons. An umbrella, or even an *en-tout-cas*, opened and shut, would probably perplex and baffle the bear until help arrived. In the Motor Department you would hurriedly don an attire similar to that of the enemy, and meet him thus on level



A SUGGESTION TO THE L.C.C.

WHY NOT HAVE ARTIFICIAL DUMMY PASSENGERS ON THE THAMES STEAMBOATS DURING THE WINTER MONTHS TO REPLACE THE LIVE ONES WHO ARE NOT FORTHCOMING? IT WOULD GIVE QUITE A REFRESHING AIR OF PROFIT AND POPULARITY.

ground as a friend. He might even take you for a wealthy beirress and fall in love with you, and you could easily make his passion his fall (as in the case of SAMSON and MARK ANTONY) by luring him to the doors of the lift, leaping out just as it was descending and then stopping it mid-way between two floors, like MAHOMET'S coffin.

Supposing, however, that the Motor Department contained no costume likely to lead to the illusion named, you would have to continue your sprint to, say, the Wine and Spirits or Confectionery Departments. Probably ten-pound boxes of caramels, or half a dozen bottles of assorted liqueurs would be equally effectual in detaining the adversary until Scotland Yard could be communicated with.

II.—A TIGER ON THE LINKS.

Instances of the escape of the larger carnivores from travelling menageries have been so frequent of late that it is highly desirable to be prepared for such an emergency as this. Tigers which have been kept in captivity for any length of time generally become foot-sore, and on regaining their liberty almost invariably leave the hard road for grass-lands. Thus the well-kept turf of a good golf-course proves irresistibly attractive to an emancipated tiger, and devotees of the Royal and Ancient game will do well to lay their plans in advance lest they should suddenly encounter one of the monarchs of the jungle. It is obvious that the danger can be considerably minimised by the employment of a plump fore-caddie, and on some links where water-hazards abound can be successfully avoided by plunging into the burn or pond. The greatest risk, however, is run when the animal is lying in a sand bunker where its colour harmonises most deceptively with that of the surroundings. To guard against this danger it is not a bad plan to employ sand of a reddish tint, but if this precaution has not been taken, three courses are open to the player. He may either drop suddenly on all fours, a device which has sometimes been known to put bulls to flight, or if he happens to have any sandwiches in his pocket he may offer them to the tiger, or, as a last resource, he may use his niblick. Whether the Fairlie or the ordinary pattern is the better is difficult to say off-hand, but at least it may be asserted that in no circumstances should a wooden club be used. In conclusion it may be noted that, whatever may be said as to the advisability of saying Bo! to a goose, it is futile to cry Fore! to a tiger.

III.—A WHALE IN THE ROUND POND.

As is well known, showers of fishes occasionally take place in abnormal meteorological conditions, and if, as Sir

NORMAN LOCKYER and other experts believe, there is good reason to expect a cycle of wet years of altogether exceptional humidity, the size of these fishes will undoubtedly advance in geometrical, if not in harmonic progression. The appearance therefore of a whale in the Round Pond can no longer be looked upon as a remote contingency, and in such cases to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Panic is to be strongly discouraged, for if it be true that it is no good crying over spilt milk it is even truer that it is no use to blubber over a dropped whale.

Much, of course, will depend upon the size of the whale, but assuming that he



Rustic (to beginner, who has charged the hedge). "It's NO GOOD, SIR. THEY THINGS WO'ST JUMP!"

(or she) is a full-blown sperm cachalot, the safest course is at once to telegraph for Mr. FRANK BULLEN, the great cetacean specialist, and pending his arrival to serenade the whale with a full band, conducted by Mr. HENRY BIRD, the organist of the adjoining church of St. Mary Abbot's. Whales, like seals, are notoriously susceptible to music, and will remain perfectly quiescent when under its spell. Mr. BULLEN and his corps of skilled harpooners may be trusted to do the rest, and the oil can be drained off into the Tube or the Underground, where its lubricating qualities cannot fail to promote the smoothness of the traffic.

A PUBLISHER advertises: *The Wives of Henry the Eighth. Third Thousand.* Surely there is some exaggeration here?

ARTLESS CONVERSATIONS.

In the Manner of the New Advertising.

I.—OVERHEARD AT THE OFFICERS' MESS.

Col. F. Hullo, boys! What have you all been doin' this afternoon? Motrin'?

You, Major.

Major S. No, I've been indoors.

Col. F. And you, Captain?

Capt. B. I've been indoors too.

Col. F. And you, Mr. DASH?

Mr. D. I've been indoors, Sir.

Col. F. Indoors! Why, what's comin' over the service? It's goin' to the cats. Indoors, on a day like this, too! Indoors, — me! And what have you been doin' indoors, pray? Readin'?

Mr. D. Yes, reading.

Col. F. Readin'. My —! Here, get me a stiff brandy-and-soda. Readin'? Readin' what? *The Soldier's Pocket Book*, I hope?

Mr. D. No, Sir; library books.

Col. F. Library books! Here, another brandy-and-soda. What library?

Major S. The new library in connexion with the Banner.

Col. F. I never heard of it. What is it?

Capt. B. It is a most admirable system, by Jove. You pay a subscription which works out to a halfpenny a day —

Major S. And you can have two volumes as often as you like.

Col. F. What for?

Mr. D. To read.

Col. F. Oh yes, I see, to read. And you're all doin' it all day long, are you?

Major S. Yes, there's over half a million books to choose from.

Col. F. Is that enough?

Capt. B. Oh yes, Colonel.

Mr. D. And you've no idea how extensive is the area of free delivery. Why, they send as far as Colney Hatch.

Col. F. Indeed, what you say interests me deeply. I must join. I like a bit of readin' now and then.

II.—THROUGH THE CHAPTER HOUSE KEYHOLE.

The Dean. Ah, Archdeacon, is that a postal order?

The Archdeacon. Yes, Dean, you have divined accurately.

The Dean. For five shillings, if my eyes do not deceive me?

The Archdeacon. You are right again, dear friend.

First Canon. What's that? The Archdeacon sending away a five-shilling postal order?

The Dean. Yes, indeed.

Second Canon. Will wonders never cease?

All. Ha! Ha!

The Dean. Sh-h-h-h-h-h! The vergers might hear.

All. True, too true.

Third Canon. And may we inquire,

dear Archdeacon, as to the destination of this princely sum?

The Archdeacon. Certainly, it is a subject on which I am never tired of being eloquent. It is a monthly instalment for the "Library of the Tittiest Bits in all Literature," now being offered at the lowest possible rates to the readers of *The Waste-Paper Basket*.

Third Canon. Is it a good work?

The Archdeacon. Oh, excellent. Full of apposite quotations, from BACCHYLIDES to BARRIE, from SOLOMON to SHAW.

Second Canon. And all for five shillings?

The Archdeacon. Not exactly for five shillings. Five shillings a month.

The Dean. For how long?

The Archdeacon. That, I regret to say, I have not yet discovered; but you get the volumes after the first payment.

First Canon. And you need not continue to pay, you mean?

The Dean. Sh-h-h-h-h-h! The minor canons, the minor canons.

All. Too true.

Second Canon. And the books are really worth having?

The Archdeacon. Indeed they are, my brethren. I doubt if so great an assemblage of scraps was ever before brought together. I know of no recreation so certain after an exhausting service.

All. We must subscribe too, and at once. Thank you, dear Archdeacon, for bringing this price-less boon before our notice.

THE MARRIAGE MARKET.

[A weekly contemporary has noted the modern tendency to regard matrimony as a business speculation, and hinted that a time may come when we shall see the financial papers devoting a column to matrimonial intelligence.]

The marriage market seems to be recovering from the recent depression, and the tone was distinctly healthier last week. As usual, there was a strong demand for gilt-edged securities of all classes.

American futures are as brisk as ever. The fact, however, that the Yankee Parent Stock is very firm, with a distinct tendency to become bearish, has had a

depressing effect on Younger Sons, who are not so bright as they were. Athletes, however, are displaying a great increase of activity now that the hockey season is in full swing, and have recently hardened perceptibly. Blondes, again, are in fair demand, but increased supplies have favoured buyers, prices declining four points in the week.

The export trade is increasing by leaps and bounds, and shipments for October alone show an increase of 1,239 over the corresponding period last year. In particular, there is a strong movement for staples in the Colonial outlets, and many transactions in the finer and fancy descriptions are recorded, especially in

also found considerable favour. There were several offers of bleached goods, but these gave signs of falling off, and are not so popular as they were. Eyebrows, again, displayed a strong upward tendency, but, in some quarters, Figures have not been so satisfactory, Waists, in particular, closing at a slight reduction.

A new Company is being formed to exploit certain tracts in India where, it is believed, several rich deposits exist. The Company's expert, Mr. EUGEN SANDOW, has recently visited the district, and confidently expresses the opinion that it is capable of great development.

We understand that, during the winter, calls may be expected from several of

the new Limited Companies which were registered in Mayfair towards the end of the season.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MÈRE DE DOUZE.—We should certainly advise you to hold. Foreigners are out of favour just now, but the market is notoriously sensitive to changes of sentiment, and may improve at any moment.

TOM.—Stage Favourites are expensive and not particularly safe. We should certainly not recommend you to touch them. Hope Deferreds, it is true, are not particularly popular just now, but if you are prepared to hold on you may be remunerated in time.

JIMMY.—The investment certainly seems very attractive, and we can confidently recommend you to plunge. From what you tell us we should imagine that it will grow dearer every day.

AGNES.—You are only one of many who still believe in the old fallacy that the Younger Male Stock is irredeemable. In point of fact it is nothing of the kind. The classes of security you mention are highly desirable. They have been steady for some time now, and, so far as we can see, are likely to remain so.

BACKSLIDER.—The penalty for failing to meet an engagement varies with the circumstances, and is fixed by a committee of twelve. The speculation was exceedingly hazardous, and you should have gone more thoroughly into the matter before entering into the agreement.



VERY MANY THANKS.

Roy (who has been out to tea). "MRS. FREEMAN'S CAKE IS BETTER THAN OURS, MAMMA."

Mamma. "I HOPE YOU SAID 'THANK YOU,' NICELY?"

Roy. "OH, YES, MAMMA. I SAID IT FIVE TIMES."

Mamma. "YOU NEED ONLY HAVE SAID IT ONCE, DEAR."

Roy. "BUT I HAD FIVE PIECES OF CAKE, MAMMA!"

the better qualities, but the demand for raw material continues weak.

Plain descriptions, on the whole, seem rather dull, and there has not been much demand for them. Consequently the stocks in hand are very big, and several large holders have been obliged to unload at a loss.

Continental Adventuresses have been moving very rapidly, but they are being heavily discounted just now, and there is a strong indisposition to give much credit in this quarter. Invaders, however, which have lately been distinctly weak, have now rallied considerably, and may be expected to strengthen still more before long.

The market for options in Hair-colours is very brisk. At the last making-up gold was in great demand, while copper

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

DR. ALFRED WALLACE started what happily proved an exceptionally long and supremely useful life under the shadow of a cloud. "Our family had but few relations," he mournfully mentions in the opening sentence of *My Life* (CHAPMAN AND HALL), "and I myself never saw a grandfather or a grandmother, nor a true uncle, and but one aunt. Worse still, my father was practically an only son." A quaint way of putting it, explained by the fact that an elder brother died when three months old. These accumulated family misfortunes would have broken the spirit of some men. ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE, endowed with a serene nature, impregnable patience, irresistible energy and an insatiable appetite for beetles, soared above his circumstances. He was cheered on one occasion when, homeward-bound, he anchored at Malta on account of the state of health of two birds of paradise captured in the Malay Peninsula, and discovered close by his hotel a baker's shop, where was available an unlimited supply of cockroaches. These the birds of paradise ate, renewing their life like the eagle, and getting safely to the Zoological Gardens in London. Starting in life as a land surveyor, Dr. WALLACE's instinct irresistibly led him far afield in search of strange beetles, *rare ares*, quaint beasts, and unknown fish. In turn he visited the Amazon, the Malay Archipelago, and Australasia, adding rare specimens of natural objects to an unparalleled collection. The book would have been better if it had been confined to one volume instead of being stuffed by extraneous matter to the size of two portly ones. But, as far back as the days of HOMER, when seniors gather at the Scæan Gate they are apt to grow garrulous. My Baronite finds temporary indulgence in the octogenarian naturalist's garrulity delightful. Methuselah, conscious of exceptional advantages, was the man to enjoy every line of these 900 pages of closely printed type. Modern man, who hath but a short time to live, must needs discriminate.

Messrs. METHUEN & Co. must not be considered amenable to the charge of "belittling SHAKESPEARE" in consequence of their having reproduced all his works, clearly printed, in forty very small volumes under the style and title of *The Little Quarto Shakspeare*. Each little book is perfectly adapted to any pocket (with a shilling in it) not exceeding three inches and a quarter wide, and four inches in depth. Even with the instructive scholarly introductions and footnotes by W. J. CRAIG, there is nothing whatever heavy about them. The Baron advises the exhausted wayfarer, thirsting for a draught from the Shakspearian spring, to drop into any publisher's, accosting the attendant with, "What ho, there! bring me a small quart o' Shakspeare, neat." And they are decidedly neat.

My Baronite suspects that Mrs. KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN's favourite amongst the characters in her new story, *Rose o' the River* (CONSTABLE), is the one who fills the title rôle. *Rose Wiley* is, in truth, sufficiently attractive to justify her pet name, *Briar Rose*. By comparison with her lover, *Stephen Waterman*, she is shallow, unsteadfast, distinctly selfish. *Stephen* is what they call on the banks of the Saco River a driver, *Anglicè*, a man who directs the drifts of fallen forest logs down the river to the lumber station. His vocation gives KATE DOUGLAS an opening for a stirring description of the picturesque scene when the logs get jammed and the country-side turns out to free them. Reading the animated page one feels the breath of the mountain air on his cheeks and hears the glad rush of the emancipated river. A delightful character is *Rose's* grandfather, Mr. Wiley, with his reminiscences of "old Kennebec" River and his outspoken contempt for the unimportance of the Saco, by whose

banks fortune and an impregnable dislike for hard work have brought him. As usual, KATE DOUGLAS does not spoil good work by attenuation. *Rose o' the River* is a dainty little volume, charmingly illustrated by Mr. GEORGE WRIGHT, and calculated to carry the reader through a couple of pleasant hours.

On *Picturesque Yorkshire* (VALENTINE AND SONS) Mr. WILLIAM ANDREWS and his editor, A. H. MILLAR, F.S.A. Scot., are to be congratulated. Walter-Scotians, remembering *Isaac of York*, will sincerely hope that he was not among the five hundred Jews who, at the accession of RICHARD THE FIRST, suffered at the hands of these Yorkers. The illustrations, reproduced photographs, are excellent.

In writing *The Difficult Way* (SMITH, ELDER), MABEL DEARMER sets herself a difficult task. It is to trace out the process by which a woman, absolutely regardless of self, its weakness and its passions, reaches the perfectness of a happy life by giving herself up to working out the physical and spiritual good of others. The theme is familiar enough. The merit lies in so handling it that it shall avoid the commonplace. This triumph has been achieved. There are some not altogether satisfactory characters in the play. But the principal part, assumed by *Nan Pilgrim*, is finely conceived and admirably worked out. After a fashion not unknown to women who write and to some men, MABEL DEARMER has used up scraps of home-made poetry, and, *à propos de bottles*, scatters them over her pages. There is one on page 154, a gem of eleven lines, in which my Baronite recognises true poetry.

Ten Years of Tory Government (Liberal Publication Department) is perhaps a little monotonous in its tone. Professedly a handbook for the use of Liberals, it abundantly provides powder and shot for the forthcoming election campaign. Omitting the Fiscal Question, a merciful concession, it covers the record of Tory dealing with domestic questions from 1895 to the end of last session. As Mr. BIRRELL, who contributes what is sometimes called a Foreword, admits, the book is compiled from a Liberal point of view. But, as he justly adds, "chapter and verse is given for every statement printed." Whilst Liberal candidates will find it exceedingly meaty in the way of sustaining their cause, my Baronite recommends it to gentlemen on the other side as usefully indicating in advance what they have to answer, and, if possible, to refute.

The Spider's Eye, by WILLIAM LE QUEUX (CASSELL & Co.). Not a bad title; but is a spider's "vision limited" to one optic? Let not any skipper imagine that a mere cursory reading will enable him to pass an examination as to intricacies of plot. Here is a poser, put by one of the characters to another—"But were you aware of who the man was who was discovered dead in your room?" No wonder the reply is "No; not in the least." Those who remember *Dora* may think they are about to detect a criminal by "a faint odour of some sweet perfume, the same odour that permeated the drawer in which the handkerchiefs were kept"—but not a bit of it. This is only the trail of the red herring. The literary sensational sportsman who rides in Mr. LE QUEUX's country has his work cut out for him, but he will go right through from cover to cover, and will congratulate himself on a good run, even if it be not quite up to the best of what this Master has previously provided for him.

